

6-1977

Chapter 6, Selected Papers on a Serbian Village: Social Structure as Reflected by History, Demography and Oral Tradition

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Halpern, Joel and Halpern, Barbara, "Chapter 6, Selected Papers on a Serbian Village: Social Structure as Reflected by History, Demography and Oral Tradition" (1977). *Research Report 17: Selected papers on a Serbian Village: Social Structure as Reflected by History, Demography and Oral Tradition*. 8.

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RESEARCH ON ORAL TRADITIONAL EXPRESSION IN ŠUMADIJA
AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE STUDY OF OTHER ORAL TRADITIONS*

by

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The purpose of this paper is to report the results of a joint interdisciplinary endeavor, "Aspects of Serbian Oral Expression," an NEH-sponsored investigation, the field phase of which was carried on in Orašac during 1975.¹ The focus of the project was the oral culture of a Serbian village, as it exists not only in formally recognized prose and poetic genres like the folktale or epic, but also in more informal genres such as the genealogy and healing charm.² We were concerned with collecting orally patterned speech of all kinds and with preserving, insofar as possible, the socio-cultural contexts which made the various speech acts meaningful. What will eventually result is an overall profile illustrating the operation of orality at all levels of village society, from the simplest traditional recipe to the most extended epic narrative. In what follows I will begin by placing our study against the background of what has preceded it in the field of oral literature research (Part I). The next section will consist of a review of the 1975 collection and a short discussion of the more important (because largely uncollected and unstudied) items (Part II). The conclusion will describe the analyses completed to date and those either in progress or about to be initiated (Part III).

I

Milman Parry's closely argued studies of traditional diction in the Homeric Greek epics form the cornerstone of oral literary investigation. Faced as were all classicists with the celebrated "Homeric Question"³--literally, who was Homer and, if he actually existed, could he have composed both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*?--Parry was to suggest a unique and brilliant answer. In his two French theses, *L'Épithète traditionnelle dans Homère: Essai sur un problème de style homérique* and *Les Formules et la métrique d'Homère*,⁴ he presented evidence for a radically new view of the Greek bard and his poems. Homer, Parry claimed, was a traditional poet who worked within a highly formulaic and stylized epic diction which was built up over generations and which became the inheritance of every singer (ἀοιδός) who was part of the tradition.

The repeated lines and passages so typical of the Iliad and Odyssey were generated by the action of meter upon language, so that fixed phrases became part of a singer's repertoire.⁵

The oral term entered Parry's equation in two essays published in 1930 and 1932 under the general title "Studies in the Epic Technique of Oral Verse-Making."⁶ Basing his model of the pre-literate poet mainly on Matthias Murko's earlier accounts of Balkan guslari,⁷ he wrote:

The poet who composes with only the spoken word a poem of any length must be able to fit his words into the mould of his verse after a fixed pattern. Unlike the poet who writes out his lines,--or even dictates them,--he cannot think without hurry about his next word, nor change what he has made, nor, before going on, read over what he has just written ("Studies I," MHV, p. 269).

The process of oral composition as Parry described it is clearly at one phenomenological remove from what we understand as the customary, written form of composition; until it is cast into permanence with the advent of literacy, any oral utterance is known only as sound and must be preserved through usage, as are related kinds of ritualistic behavior.⁸

Parry identified one aspect of oral diction as the "formula," "a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea" ("Studies I," MHV, p. 272). He understood formulas as lines or part-lines which constituted the "words" of the poet and which enabled him to "speak" the epics extemporaneously in performance. The poetic language was thus a kind of singer's patois, assembled over many generations by countless bards who themselves spoke dialects of ancient Greek quite distinct from one another.⁹ Though he had very little time to develop his notions before he died in 1935, Parry also began the description of a larger unit of oral epic diction--the "theme." He explained these units, which Walter Arend had called "typical scenes," as traditional commonplaces:

The singer of tales, unlike the writer of poetry, is never free of his tradition.

He has not learned his art from a varied reading, but only from listening to older singers. He has no pen and ink to let him slowly work out a novel way of recounting novel actions, but must make up his tale without pausing, in the speed of his singing. This he can do only by telling each action as it comes up in more or less the usual verses which go with that way.¹⁰

Parry next tested his hypotheses, so extensively documented in the Homeric corpus, in the "living laboratory" of the Serbo-Croatian oral tradition. During 1933-35 he and his co-worker Albert B. Lord made an extensive collection of epic pesme from a multitude of singers in the regions of Novi Pazar, Bjelo Polje, Kolašin, Gacko, Stolac, and Bihać, as well as parts of Macedonia.¹¹ Lord was to return to many of these areas and to others in later years, to supplement and add historical depth to the original sample of texts¹²; the entire corpus is preserved in the Milman Parry Collection of Oral Literature at Harvard University. So far four volumes of edited songs and translations have appeared in the series Srpskohrvatske Junačke Pesme (Serbo-Croatian Heroic Songs): the first two present the Novi Pazar tradition in multiple versions of pesme by five singers, and the latter two contain the complete Zenidba Smailagina Sina (The Wedding of Smailagić Meho), an epic song by Avdo Medžedović which compares in length and quality to the Homeric Odyssey.¹³

With Parry's death the execution of his plans for publication of the collection and comparative studies dealing with applications of the Yugoslav material to other traditions was undertaken by Lord.¹⁴ The first product of the research was a series of articles under the title "Homer and Huso" on the problems of the singer's rests, narrative inconsistencies, and enjambement in Homeric and Serbo-Croatian oral song.¹⁵ In 1960 Lord's classic The Singer of Tales appeared,¹⁶ presenting a comprehensive description of the guslar's art and bringing that information to bear comparatively on Homer and oral poetry in Old English, Old French, and modern Greek. Of seminal importance to the development of the oral theory was the chapter on "themes," defined as "groups of ideas regularly used in telling a tale in the formulaic style of traditional song" (p. 68).¹⁷ The dynamics of longer, stable sections of narrative, which Parry had

time only to adumbrate, were clearly and precisely explicated with reference to the texts from Yugoslavia. Lord's chapters on "Songs and the Song" and "Writing and Oral Tradition" also had a considerable influence on investigations that followed. In the former he explained that an "original" text does not exist in oral tradition, but that each performance is an "original" in the sense that it represents an entire re-creation of the song.¹⁸ This observation carries great significance for the "dead" traditions, where often only a single manuscript of a given poem has survived.¹⁹ In the latter chapter, Lord examined the influence of the written upon the spoken word,²⁰ and distinguished between actual, uninterrupted recordings and written transcriptions of oral performance. Using examples from the Parry Collection, he showed that the staccato rhythm of performance induced by the inevitable delays involved in written transcription made for discernible differences in the nature of the text which resulted: "From the point of view of verse-making, dictation carries no great advantage to the singer, but from that of song-making it may be instrumental in producing the finest and longest of songs" (Singer, p. 128).²¹

Even before the publication of The Singer of Tales, the oral theory had begun to be extended to other literatures.²² In 1953 Francis P. Magoun, Jr. published his influential "The Oral-Formulaic Character of Anglo-Saxon Narrative Poetry,"²³ in which he claimed that the entire Old English canon was the formulaic product of a tradition of scopas, the medieval English equivalent of the Yugoslav guslari. Magoun²⁴ and Stanley B. Greenfield²⁵ introduced thematic analysis two years later, ranging widely over the corpus to compare instances of the themes of "the beasts of battle" and "exile." Almost concurrently Robert P. Creed completed a formulaic analysis of the diction of Beowulf²⁶ and proposed new ways of emending²⁷ and criticizing²⁸ Old English poems. Somewhat later Donald K. Fry argued for a view of the formula based in generative linguistics,²⁹ and for a description of recurrent narrative scenes that distinguished between the "theme" and the "type-scene."³⁰ Most recently, computer analysis of Beowulf has revealed that there exist metrical formulas underlying the verbal patterns, and that the unit of repetition in Old English themes is similar to, but not the same as that in Homeric and Serbo-Croatian themes.³¹

Computer studies have also been performed on the extant Old French epic poems by Joseph Duggan. As a result of comparative formulaic analyses of fourteen chansons de geste, he posits a threshold for determining whether a given passage or poem is oral or written: ". . . if an Old French narrative poem is less than 20% straight repetition, it probably derives from literary, or written, creation. When the formula density exceeds 20%, it is strong evidence of oral composition, and the probability rises as the figure increases over 20%."³² Duggan's work is the most recent and thoroughgoing consideration of a problem first stated, for practical purposes, in Jean Rychner's La chanson de geste: Essai sur l'art épique des jongleurs.³³ Another oral tradition which has lately received a great deal of attention is the vast and heterogeneous body of material from Africa. Ruth Finnegan and Jeff Opland, to mention only two of the many scholars involved with the study of African tradition, have made interesting contributions to the ongoing assessment of the effects of writing upon a contemporary oral culture.³⁴

Even a representative discussion of bibliography in the various literatures whose criticism has undergone significant change since the emergence of the oral theory would occupy an entire essay. I choose to bring this section of the paper to a close by taking note of a change in emphasis in the evolution of the theory and its application. Recent studies in classics, such as Gregory Nagy's Comparative Studies in Greek and Indic Meter³⁵ and Berkley Peabody's The Winged Word³⁶, have underlined the necessity for a diachronic as well as synchronic perspective on oral process. As Lord has suggested in his "Foreword" to the latter volume,

At a time when the emphasis in scholarship and in criticism alike has gone too heavily in the direction of synchronic structuralism, it is well to be reminded of the springs of language and of verbal art in oral traditional literature, because tradition's point of view is by definition diachronic, or, to avoid scientific terminology, it is conscious of the past and of the present's debt to that past (p. xii).

Peabody has also elegantly described the role of sound

patterns in the Hesiodic theme, insisting on the importance of what is heard rather than what is thought or deciphered in reading.³⁷ This is a deceptively simple fact of oral tradition, but one that the theory has consistently lost sight of as it struggled to formulate an explanation of orality in a highly literate, visual culture. If we are to achieve verisimilitude in the study of oral literature, we need more studies concerned with the diachronic depth of tradition and the primacy of sound in its phenomenology. And, as noted above, we also need careful and thorough analyses of contemporary, living oral traditions.

II

Our purpose in investigating "Aspects of Serbian Oral Expression" was not to compile more texts of epic songs, but to relate all observable forms of oral communication to the oral culture as a whole. Accordingly, the interdisciplinary research team consisted of specialists in sociolinguistics, oral traditions, demography, and the socio-cultural anthropology of the area. The recorded sample includes a wide range of types of verbal interchange, for we had realized from listening to tapes made earlier by members of the research team that even the everyday conversations of some of the older informants was patterned.³⁸ While this overview method governed the selection of our material to some extent, two other factors also helped determine research procedures and results. The first was a commitment to preserving the social situation as free of distorting elements as possible while still giving some structure to the interview. We tried not to divorce a particular verbal performance from its cultural context in order not to encourage a synthetic situation and resultant synthetic performance. This approach also produced some extremely rich material. The second factor which contributed a focus to our survey perspective was a progressive evaluation of texts and conversations recorded. Between interviewing sessions we carefully audited the day's work and decided whom or what to try to record next on the basis of what seemed most valuable and interesting to date. For example, the latter part of our collection contains a large sample of bajanje (most faithfully translated

as "white magic"), which for many reasons we have come to consider one of the most significant of the informal traditional genres.³⁹

Most of our material was gathered in Orašac,⁴⁰ although we conducted several interviews in nearby villages. Because it is a Christian (Serbian Orthodox) area, this region has not developed a tradition of lengthy epics, as have the Moslem areas in which Parry and Lord made their expeditions.⁴¹ But, since the older villagers (perhaps sixty years of age and more) are still functionally pre-literate, the village maintains a whole spectrum of oral forms. Symptomatic of people's commitment to these traditional modes of expression is the fact that they preserve and practice the bajanje mentioned above, though it has been officially outlawed for some time and though some of the younger people, having been exposed to the modernity of Belgrade, are frankly embarrassed by their parents' belief in such things. Where literacy is in evidence, it is used only as a convenience--to read occasional letters from relatives in the city or temporarily working in Western Europe, or to transact administrative affairs, but never to commit traditional oral expression to writing and thus to a fixed text. For the older people in the village, the culture is still decidedly an oral culture.

The table below summarizes our 1975 collection in review form; no attempt is made therein to be more than indicative.⁴² Where an interview seemed of special interest for one reason or another, I have added further commentary in the pages following the table.⁴³

Informant Code	Name	Age	Sex	Other Personal Data	Interview Situation	Locus	Verbal Modes	Text(s)	Notes
001	Čika Ljubo	74	M	head of <u>zadruga</u> ⁴⁴	JH,JF,X, son-in-law grandson	home	conv., genealog. fragments		some patterned speech
002	Čika Marko	65	M	lives alone with son	JH,BH,JF, X	dom.'s home	conv., geneal. fragments, folktale	wildcat story	some patterned speech
003	Slobodan	36	M		JH,X, dom-a	dom.'s home	conv.		<u>zadruga</u>
004	<u>dom.</u>	65	M	lives with wife, next generation has left village	JH,JF,X	home	conv.		singing, <u>guslari</u>
005	<u>dom. and dom-a.</u>	57	M	as 004	JH,BH,JF,	home	conv.,	wedding	singing, <u>guslari</u> , <u>prelo</u> ⁴⁵
		58	F		X,Y,KH,SH, CH,MF,JBF		ritual song, epic song	lyric, Kosovo fragment	
006	Deda Mile	84	M	lives alone	JH,BH,JF, X	home	conv., geneal. fragments		data on Matijašević and Stojan- ović lineages, patterned speech

Informant Code	Name	Age	Sex	Other Personal Data	Interview Situation	Locus	Verbal Modes	Text(s)	Notes
<u>007</u>	as <u>006</u>	-	-		JH, JF, X, F age-mate to X	home, field near home	conv., geneal. fragments		as <u>006</u>
<u>008</u>	Čika Ratko	c.75	M	head of <u>zadruga</u>	JH, BH, JF, X, son, son's wife, company from Bosnia	home	conv., epic song, folktale	Aga od <u>Ribnika</u> sung & recited texts	singing, guslari, instrument, Ilić fam- ily history
<u>009</u>	Čika Mika	73	M	lives with wife	JH, BH, JF, X, wife	home	conv., epic song, genealog. fragments	Borba <u>Jugosloven-</u> <u>skih Partii-</u> <u>zana, 2</u> additional partisan songs	edited source texts
<u>010</u>	---	-	-	large group of all ages at the <u>prelo</u>		nearby village			
<u>011</u>	Deda Čedo	88	M	head of 4-gen. <u>zadruga</u>	JH, BH, X, son, grandson, grand- daughter	home (near- by vil- lage)	conv., folktale		patterned speech
<u>012</u>	Deda Vlado	76	M	lives with wife	JH, BH, JF, X, zet, ⁴⁶ <u>zet's</u> <u>wife &</u> <u>son</u>	home (near- by vil- lage)	conv., epic song, informal genres	recitation of military roster, <u>Na</u> <u>Kosmaju</u> (rec.), <u>Na</u> <u>Drini (rec.)</u> <u>Kraljevic</u> <u>Marko hvatiše</u> <u>sluga,</u>	singing, instrument, data on ritual events

Informant Code	Name	Age	Sex	Other Personal Data	Interview Situation	Locus	Verbal Modes	Text(s)	Notes
<u>Q12</u>								Janković Sto- jan i Smil- janić Ilija, neverna majka song, harvest song	
<u>Q13</u>	--	--	--	group of mourners	BH, JF, X	grave- yard	mourning laments (tužba- lice)		
<u>Q14</u>	Deda Vlado	--	as Q12	--	BH, JF, X, zet, zet's wife	home (near- by vil- lage)	conv., epic song, informal genres	Na Drini, Na Kosmaju, Kosovo song, Aga od Ribnika	gnomic phrases in conv., extempor- aneous "gnomes"
<u>Q15</u>	Tetka Desanka	55	F	married to head of zadruga	BH, JF, X, daughter, daughter- in-law, husband, 4 grand- children	home	conv., healing charms (bajanje)	skin disease charm (3 reci- tations)	grandson's partici- pation
<u>16</u>	Deda Bogdan	c.75	M	head of zadruga	JH, BH, JF, X, MF, dom, dom-a.	dom's home	conv., epic song		

Informant Code	Name	Age	Sex	Other Personal Data	Interview Situation	Locus	Verbal Modes	Text(s)	Notes
<u>017</u>	Tetka Dara & Čika Slavko	66 c.65	F M	live with niece	BH,JF,X, Y,niece	home	conv., folktale	Stories from the time of <u>Karadjordje</u>	
<u>018</u>	Baba Zorka	80	F	<u>lives with zadruga</u>	BH,JF,X	home	conv.		data on <u>bajanje</u> , <u>preslava</u> ; patterned speech
<u>019</u>	Tetka Desanka	--as <u>015</u> --			BH,JF,X, son, daughter- in-law, 2 grandsons	home	conv., <u>bajanje</u>	skin dis- ease charm (5 recita- tions), charm for sty (eye)	demonstra- tion of objects used in <u>bajanje</u>
<u>020</u>	Milenka	49	F	lives with daughter & grand- children	BH,JF,X, daughter, grand- children	home	conv., <u>bajanje</u>	skin dis- ease charm (4 recita- tions)	explanation of <u>vetrovi</u> (winds); difference between white & black magic
<u>021</u>	Tetka Srebrica	57	F	lives alone	BH,JF,X, MF,CH,JBF	home	conv., ritual song	<u>prelo</u> & wedding songs	patterned description of weaver's craft

Informant Code	Name	Age	Sex	Other Personal Data	Interview Situation	Locus	Verbal Modes	Text(s)	Notes
<u>022-</u>	Tetka Dara	--as 017--			BH,JF,X, husband, niece	home	conv., <u>bajanje</u> recipe, folktale	stock charm (2 recs.), treatment of infertile woman, <u>pupak</u> charm, reci- pe for <u>gi-</u> <u>banica</u> (patterned); recipe for <u>piktije</u> (patterned); "Frog in aspic" folk- tale (by husband)	enumera- tion of her father's <u>zadruga</u>
<u>023</u>	<u>dom.</u>	--as 004--			BH,X	home	conv., <u>bajanje</u>	snake-bite charm (3 recs.)	special case of male re- ceiving <u>bajanje</u>
<u>024</u>	Spomenka	50	F	lives with husband in Belgrade	JF,X	home (orig.)	conv., <u>bajanje</u>	snake-bite charm	oral- dictated text

001, 002, 006-7

These three men were able to converse at length about the history of the village and especially of their own lineages, and often drifted into episodic story formations or even the decasyllabic line of epic and lyric poetry in their narration. They placed great value in traditional times and events, much preferring the old values and ways. Deda Mile in particular indicated in fragments the tremendous amount of genealogical and historical data at his command, apparently preserved in oral poetic format.⁴⁷

008

Čika Ratko's son first tried to perform to the gusle, but, relying quite obviously on memorization rather than the re-creation which is the traditional oral style, he soon deferred to his father. The older man sang a version of the epic narrative Aga od Ribnika without hesitation, but was unable to recite continuously the same poem without the rhythmic and melodic pacing of the gusle. His son actually recited more rapidly and effortlessly without the instrument, another indication of the difference between the "learning" processes of the two generations of men in this household.

009

Čika Mika is a unique kind of guslar in our experience in Orašac and surrounding areas, for he re-composes his songs from versions found in published sources by editing the printed text to his own taste. As he reads slowly through the pesmarica ("songbook"),⁴⁸ he deletes certain passages according to his sense of the way in which the narrative should proceed. Since he does not consult the pencil-marked songbook before or during performance, he apparently learns the modifications as part of the song and not simply as notations in a script. Only the pripev (or "proem") to his songs, always essentially the same with minor variations, does not derive from a printed source.

Q12,14

Deda Vlado, who is functionally pre-literate, maintained a formidable repertoire of epic songs. In addition,

he was able to recite the names of members of the battalion in which he served fifty years after the fact, recollect ritual songs, and compose extemporaneous couplets in decasyllable rhyme about present events. The following couplet pair, intended as a comment on having his picture taken during the interview, well illustrates how even the most ordinary, situation-specific utterance is generated from formulaic phraseology:

Ja, od Boga imam dobrog dara,

Evo mene, mojega slikara.

Ko god 'oće, ko me lepo čuje,

On mene lepo nek slikuje.⁴⁹

Ja, I have a fine gift from God,

Here is my photographer.

Whoever wishes, whoever hears me [sing] nicely,

Let him take my picture nicely.

Of course, there are no photographers in epic tradition (though there are telephones!⁵⁰). But the four- and six-syllable cola which make up these four lines proliferate--with appropriate modifications--throughout the poetic corpus. The guslar is expressing himself in the traditional poetic idiom, a dialect in its own right.⁵¹

Another aspect of Deda Vlado's art which deserves comment is his habit of stringing two or three lines together in a single extended utterance unified by the lack of pause in the melody.⁵² Instead of two and one-half measures of vocal melody followed by a half measure on the instrument alone (one line), he often sings either five or 7-1/2 measures (either two or three lines) before the vocal rest is taken and the gusle sounds alone. This compounding and syncopation of lines, which occurs only after he has been singing for some time, does not disturb the process of composition in the least: it is as if the song were forming too rapidly to articulate.⁵³ And yet he was so much in control of his performance that he could add brief interlinear glosses on the people, places, and events of his poem without losing metrical or narrative rhythm.

015, 19

Tetka Desanka, the first bajalica (or "conjurer") whom we interviewed, was recognized throughout the area for her skill in certain healing arts. Following the Parry-Lord method of eliciting multiple texts, we made two visits to her household and recorded eight versions of a skin disease charm. These highly formulaic texts of the same charm varied considerably and predictably from one another. Also of interest to those studying the transmission of oral expression is the fact that the practice of bajanje is passed on strictly through the female line.²⁴ It must be learned before the onset of puberty when a female is ritually clean and cannot be practiced until the period of fertility is finished. In other words, these charms are almost always transmitted from grandmother to granddaughter and, since village society is patriarchal and usually exogamous, knowledge of the methods of healing moves from one village to the next. This pattern diverges significantly from that of epic singing, which is restricted to males and, in Christian areas, largely to the home.

Age and sex roles thus structure verbal as well as other kinds of behavior, and adults would not consider endorsing a violation of accepted standards. The relative freedom from censure enjoyed by young children, however, offered us an insight into the traditional oral process at a very basic level. In the course of the first recitation on the day of our initial visit, Tetka Desanka hesitated at a natural seam in the charm's logic to think for a moment about what came afterwards. Her grandson, sitting in her lap, prompted her: "Otud ide Stanimir" ("Out of there comes Stanimir"). As a seven-year-old boy, he had no reason to learn the charm and he certainly was not taught it; yet he had internalized the patterned utterance and was able to reproduce it.

020

Milenka, a somewhat younger bajalica in the village, also recited the skin disease charm for the tapes. Partly because of her extremely rapid, clipped manner of speaking and partly because of her nervousness in repeating the spell for the recorder, her versions are very quickly spoken, with many elided syllables and apparently unmetrical lines. A comparison of the 020 and 015, 19 texts, however, reveals a large number of structural and formulaic similarities.

022

Tetka Dara displayed a knowledge of a variety of charms for many purposes. Her collected repertoire includes two versions of a cure for the "red sickness" in livestock, an especially interesting example because it consists of pagan, animistic elements overlain by Christian motifs. This mixture is characteristic of quite a few Old English spells as well.⁵⁵ The skin disease bajanje (015,19 and 020) also combined these elements in the juxtaposition of natural animal behavior and priestly ritual to effect a cleansing or purification. Tetka Dara's charm for "Kad zavija pupak" (literally, "When one winds up the navel"),⁵⁶ on the other hand, owes nothing to Christian models or ethos, but draws its strength explicitly from the collective power of kin and lineage. Her two recipes for gibanica (cheese-pie) and piktiže (the holiday dish of pigs' hock jelly) are sporadically metrical and exhibit definite syntactic patterning. At one point during the interview, we asked her what she did if she happened to forget a charm while she was performing it. Her answer, a highly euphonic couplet, offered the same explanation for her art as the Anglo-Saxon singer Caedmon used to account for his ability to perform orally and extemporaneously:⁵⁷

Što, ovaj, upamtim, ja upamtim;

Što ne upamtim, ja sasnim noći.

Well, what I recollect, I recollect;

What I don't recollect, I dream at night.⁵⁸

023,24

From these two informants we have a total of four versions of the snake-bite charm. What makes comparison especially interesting is that Spomenka (024) has spent most of her adult life in town, away from the village. Her brother-in-law (dom), who has remained in the village, has been called upon from time to time to practice this basma. Notwithstanding their very different adult life patterns, they preserve the charm which they learned from their dying mother and aunt in virtually the same form, with only minor variations (see further Part III).

III

Our first analysis of oral traditional material from Orasac appeared in "'Udovica Jana': A Case Study of an Oral Performance."⁵⁹ That article presents a complete text and translation of a 121-line song by Čika Aca (now deceased), transcribed from the Halperns' original taped recording, along with an examination of the poem's metrical, musical, and narrative structure. As well as the frequent singer's techniques of elision, deletion of the past auxiliary,⁶⁰ and use of extra-metrical interjections for continuity and emphasis, the "Udovica Jana" (or "Widow Jana") contains some intriguing responsions of sound.⁶¹ Rhyme occurs both from colon to colon,

Te usred pasa ukide ga glasa, 80
and within cola,
(J)ona leže u meke duške. 20

These and other examples point up the primacy of sound in the composition of oral song, apart from but complementary to the syntactic, metrical, and narrative levels of organization.

The potential always exists for the guslar to employ these patterns of sound to aesthetic advantage, as in the tantalizingly ambiguous resolution of the "Udovica Jana." The widow has intentionally sent her sons Niko and Nikola into an ambush to be perpetrated by her Moslem lover Halil. Near the end of the song she awaits the return of Halil, while she and her daughter Jelica (who secretly furnished her brothers with rifles) lead two separate kolo dances, each dance symbolic of one of the two possible outcomes of the ambush. In this context of intense expectation the guslar sings:

(J)ali ide dva rodjena sina. 104

The listeners may interpret (J)ali as either (1) the conjunction meaning "but" or (2) the first two syllables of the name of Jana's lover, (J)Ali-le. Redoubling that uncertainty is the verb form

ide, third singular present tense of ići (to come, go). Once the ambiguity of the first two syllables is resolved, the verb comes into play. The syntactic indication (3rd pers. sing.) is that Halil has survived and that Niko and Nikola are dead. With the second colon formula dva rodjena sina (two born sons), however, the real victors are named and the kolo structures dissolved. The guslar has at last released the tension, but not before stretching the string of his narrative to the breaking point in a virtuoso display of traditional oral artistry.⁶²

One cannot underestimate the importance of sound in the phenomenology of bajanje, as we have emphasized in our joint study "The Power of the Word: Healing Charms as an Oral Genre."⁶³ Perhaps the most effective way to emphasize this fact is to reproduce selections from a charm against erysipelas (the "red wind") which is analyzed in much greater detail in that article:

Otuđ ide crveni konj,

Crveni čovek, crvena usta,

Crvene ruke, crvene noge,

Crvena grifa, crvena kopita.

Kako dodje, tako stiže,

5

Ovu boljku odmah diže;

I odnose i prenose,

Preko mora bez odmora --

Gde mačka ne mauće,

Gde svinjče ne guriće,

10

Gde ovce ne bleje,

Gde koze ne vreće,

Gde pop ne dolazi,
Gde krst ne donosi,
Da se kolač ne lomi, 15
Da se sveće ne pali.

* * * * *

Otud ide Ugimir,
Ugini boljku, uginil!
Otud ide Stanimir,
Stani boljku, stani! 20
Otud ide Persa,
Prestani boljku, prestani!

Out of there comes the red horse,
The red man, the red mouth,
The red arms, the red legs,
The red mane, the red hooves.
As he comes, so he approaches, 5
He lifts out the disease immediately;
He carries it off and carries it away,
Across the sea without delay --
Where the cat doesn't meow,
Where the pigs don't grunt, 10
Where the sheep don't bleat,
Where the goats don't low,

Where the priest doesn't come,
Where the cross isn't borne,
So that ritual bread isn't broken, 15
So that candles aren't lit.

* * * * *

Out of there comes Ugimir,
Kill the disease, kill it!
Out of there comes Stanimir,
Halt the disease, halt it! 20
Out of there comes Persa,
Stop the disease, stop it!

The first four lines describe a horse and rider combination, red to match the color of the illness, which is to ride out of the "other" world (Otud) and remove the intrusive disease from its unnatural locus in "this" world. Various oral patterns help to structure this charm; they include a fairly regular and symmetrical line configuration, consistent rhythm (though the meter is not strictly syllabic), the incantational effect of the crven- (X) frame (where the variable element X is a part of the horse and rider figure), and the /g/-/k/ velar consonant exchange in the last two lines (ruke/noge and grifa/kopita).⁶⁴ Two rhyming couplets comprise the next four lines: the first pair exhibits both line-to-line (stiže/diže) and colon-to-colon rhyme (Kako/tako), while the second pair repeats whole morphemes (-nose/-nose) and homonyms which are unrelated morphemically (more/-mora).⁶⁵ With line 8 begins a catalog of "non-occurrences" which characterizes the "otherness" of the world from which disease emanates. Four instances of the

Gde (animal) ne (animal_sound)

pattern account for the syntax of half of the list; the next four lines, concerned with Christian custom, are

formed by analogy from the pattern with certain substitutions. Line-internal structuring devices include alliteration, assonance, consonance, and rhyme. The metonymic dispelling of the disease follows the catalog in lines 17-22. Three magical names are invoked, names which contain a verb of exorcism as their first elements and (in two cases) the word mir (the hoped-for result: "calm, peace") as their second elements. By intoning Ugimir, for example, the bajalica attempts to ugini ("kill") the illness.⁶⁶

The overall action of the charm symbolically presents an epistemological dysfunction in need of a remedy: disease, by nature an inhabitant of the "other" world, has entered "this" world and caused an imbalance. The conjurer summons the horse and rider, a cow, a hen, and the three metonymic agents--all of them are also inhabitants of the "other" world--to come and take the illness back to its place of origin. The cow and hen are red to match the particular ailment (erysipelas), and they give birth to and nourish their red progeny during the course of the charm. A paradigm can be discerned as follows:

X ₁	provides	X ₂	to nourish	X ₃
cow		milk		calf
hen		worms		chicks
<u>bajalica</u>		<u>bajanje</u>		patient

If we indicate redness (or disease) with a minus sign (-) and lack of redness (or health) with a plus sign (+), some dynamic interrelationships become apparent:

X ₁	provides	X ₂	to nourish	X ₃
-		-		-
-		-		-
+		+		- → +

The bajalica's nourishment and its effect run parallel to and are reinforced by the actions of the cow and hen. The charm ends with the conjurer's agents returning to

the "other world" by means of the kurjak ("wolf"), a magical animal who straddles the two worlds. Her last words emphasize the importance of sound in the exorcism: "Od mog odgovora bio lek" ("From my speaking out may there be the cure").⁶⁷

The third study of oral expression so far completed, "Hybrid Prosody and Single Half-lines in Old English and Serbo-Croatian Poetry," is the first truly comparative piece to emerge from our field data. It treats by analogy a long-disputed problem in Anglo-Saxon philology, namely, the identity of the single, apparently incomplete half-line.⁶⁸ The Old English alliterative line⁶⁹ and the Serbo-Croatian octosyllable (the predominant meter of bajanje) have certain formal resemblances:

Old English alliterative line (x = stressed syllable)

	x		x		x		x
ex:	<u>wárleas</u>	<u>wérod.</u>		<u>Wáldend</u>	<u>sénde</u>	(Genesis 67)	⁷⁰
	faithless	troop.		The Ruler	sent		

Serbo-Croatian octosyllable (s = syllable)

	1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8
	s	s	s	s		s	s	s	s
ex:	<u>Pre-ko</u>	<u>mo-ra</u>				<u>bez</u>	<u>od-mo-ra</u>		
	Across	the sea				without	delay		

By observing in performance both "normal" (in the sense of "more common") formations (1) and "hybrid" realizations (2),

<u>I</u>	<u>odnose</u>		<u>preko</u>	<u>mora,</u>		
					(1)	
<u>Preko</u>	<u>mora</u>		<u>bez</u>	<u>odmora,</u>		

and

<u>I</u>	<u>odnese</u>	/	<u>preko</u>	<u>mora</u>	/	<u>bez</u>	<u>odmora,</u>	(2)
----------	---------------	---	--------------	-------------	---	------------	----------------	-----

it becomes apparent that the octosyllable has two levels of metrical organization--the whole line and the half-line. At any given point, and for many poetic reasons, the latter may supersede the former to produce a triplet of half-lines like (2) above. Though the statistically unusual combination may seem to be a faulty verse, it is simply the result of a modulation in rhythm.⁷¹

This notion of hybrid metrics well explains the occasional emergence of what seems to be a single half-line in Old English poetry. Consider the following passage from Genesis (1593-1602):

pa nyttade Noe siððan
mid sunum sinum sidan rices
ðreohund wintra pisses lifes, 1600
freomen æfter flode, and fiftig eac,
pa he forð gewat.

Then afterwards Noah enjoyed

The wide kingdom with his sons

For three hundred years of this life-- 1600

Freeborn men after the flood--and fifty as well,

When he went forth.

Most editors have taken 1602 as a supernumerary verse, the product of either the poet's "nodding" or a scribal error. In reality, 1601-2 is a continuous triplet, which even preserves the consistent alliteration (here in "f") which is demanded by Anglo-Saxon prosody as part of the whole-line structure. The poetic justification for "pa he forð gewat" is as a boundary marker which denotes the end of the narrative of Noah's life, a function important enough to override the more usual whole-line metrical scheme.⁷² Other examples of apparent single half-lines abound in the Old English corpus, and will need individual attention. In addition, the Serbo-

Croatian analog may also be able to speak to Old English hypermetric lines, another editorial and philological problem without a satisfactory solution as yet.

Among our analyses planned and in progress, three deserve brief mention here. The first has to do with a comparison of the Anglo-Saxon and Serbo-Croatian charm traditions from the point of view of oral process. The relatively large collection of spells from medieval England⁷³ shares many linguistic and structural patterns with the bajanje in our collection. Metonymy, formulaic diction, syntactic frames, and--very prominently--responsions of sound all figure in the articulation of bajanje and its counterpart the galdor.⁷⁴ In fact, Pokorny derives galdor from Indo-European -ghel (or rufen, schreien) and bajanje from IE 2bhā- (or sprechen),⁷⁵ so that even the emic designations (folk interpretations) for charms are very much alike in the two traditions.

The charm against snake-bite (023,24) consists of a ritual transformation of the snake, first to one's sister and then to the Virgin. It would therefore seem particularly receptive to a psychoanalytic treatment; if carried out with sufficient reserve, such an analysis could decipher the symbols on an interesting level and perhaps bring us a step closer to understanding the general psychodynamics of healing magic in the culture.⁷⁶ I would attribute significance, for example, to the observed fact that the most common use for this charm is to guard against or to prevent recurrence of snakes biting a lactating cow's udders, a widespread fear in the village. Whether this constitutes psychologically healing magic in the form of an early Oedipal projection must be left to a detailed discussion.

Finally, the texts of Čika Mika (009) present an opportunity for an in-depth look at the tradition in transition from a purely oral medium to a partially literate medium. Since we are fortunate enough to have a copy of the very songbook from which he learned the Borba Jugoslovenskih Partizana, it will be possible to check the recorded performance against the printed text in order to determine the extent of his dependency on a fixed text. To what degree, for example, does he memorize his "editions"? The answer to this question is of great significance for a number of Old English poems which seem to be translations of Latin sources or versifications of prose.⁷⁷

What emerges from a consideration of our field investigation and analysis in the context of other oral literature research is a twofold concern. First, the multiplicity of genres in our collection provides an opportunity to assess the meaning of orality at a number of levels in Serbian culture. This kind of information should be useful to studies in both anthropology and oral literature. Second, the Serbo-Croatian data offers valuable comparative insights into other oral literatures, including those mentioned in this paper and many others.⁷⁸

The research has been undertaken with the aid of National Endowment for the Humanities grant 454-10002-01-01. This work took place under the auspices of a grant from the National Academy of Sciences, Washington, D.C., and the Serbian Academy of Sciences, Belgrade, during the summer of 1977. We acknowledge with particular appreciation the cooperation of the host academy in their endorsement of the field phase of the project.

These notes are discussed below in Parts II and

A list of the names of the respondents is available in the appendix. The names of the respondents are listed in the appendix. The names of the respondents are listed in the appendix.

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NOTES

* The author wishes to express his gratitude to the American Council of Learned Societies for a fellowship to carry on research at the Milman Parry Collection of Oral Literature at Harvard University in 1976-77, during which period the present report was written.

All materials resulting from the field work and all analyses so far completed (see Part III) are the product of collaboration among the investigators, principally between Barbara Kerewsky Halpern and myself.

¹The research has been undertaken with the aid of National Endowment for the Humanities grant #RC-20505-74-552. Field work took place under the aegis of participation by Joel M. Halpern in an exchange program between the National Academy of Sciences, Washington, D.C., and the Serbian Academy of Sciences, Belgrade, during the summer of 1975. We acknowledge with particular appreciation the cooperation of the host academy in their endorsement of the field phase of the project.

²These genres are discussed below in Parts II and III.

³A fine history of the controversy is available in J.A. Davison, "The Homeric Question," in A Companion to Homer, ed. by Alan J. B. Wace and Frank H. Stubbings (London: Macmillan, 1962, rpt. 1969), p. 234-65.

⁴These two studies, written for the Doctor of Letters degree at the University of Paris in 1928, are edited and translated by Adam Parry in The Making of Homeric Verse: the Collected Papers of Milman Parry (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 1-190 and 191-239, respectively. All subsequent references to Milman Parry's work will be to this edition, hereafter cited as MHV.

⁵Parry's demonstration of the rules governing noun-epithet combinations still stands as a locus classicus for the understanding of patterned diction in Homer. A recent attempt to undermine its premises by Norman Austin ("The Homeric Formula," in Archery at the Dark of the Moon: Poetic Problems in Homer's Odyssey (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 11-80) falls victim to the same misunderstanding that

has unfortunately attended Parry's work from its first appearance (see, for example, Samuel E. Bassett, The Poetry of Homer [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1938]). Contrary to what Austin and others have tried to show, the concept of traditional diction is not simply a mechanical process which allows only stereotyped verbal behavior. Homer is not "a victim of his metrical formulas" (Austin, p. 80); he uses them to aesthetic advantage within the context of his traditional society. In contemporary rural Serbian society, as we shall see below, the same concern for construing the present in terms of the past is a compelling (but not proscriptive) force behind patterned speech acts.

⁶"Studies in the Epic Technique of Oral Verse-Making. I. Homer and Homeric Style," Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, 41 (1930); 73-147, rpt. in MHV, p. 266-324; "Studies in the Epic Technique of Oral Verse-Making. II. The Homeric Language as the Language of an Oral Poetry," HSCP, 43(1932), 1-50, rpt. in MHV, p. 325-64.

⁷At the time of his examinations, Parry conferred personally with Murko through the agency of Antoine Meillet (see "Cor Huso: A Study of Southslavic Song," in MHV, p. 349). Murko's published works include: Bericht über eine Bereisung von Nordwestbosnien und der angrenzenden Gebiete von Kroatien und Dalmatien behufs Erforschung der Volksepik der bosnischen Mohammedaner (Wien: Alfred Hölder, 1913); Bericht über eine Reise zum Studium der Volksepik in Bosnien und Herzegowina im Jahre 1913 (Wien: Alfred Hölder, 1915); La poésie populaire épique en Yougoslavie au début du XX^e siècle (Paris: Librairie Honore Champion, 1929); "Nouvelles observations sur l'état actuel de la poésie épique en Yougoslavie," Revue des Etudes Slaves, 13(1933), 16-50; and Tragom srpsko-hrvatske narodne epike (putovanja u godinama 1930-32), 2 vols. (Zagreb: Jugoslavenska Akademija Znanosti i Umjetnosti, 1951).

⁸On the effects of literacy on an oral culture, see especially Walter J. Ong, The Presence of the Word: Some Prolegomena for Cultural and Religious History (1967; rpt. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1970).

⁹In "Studies II" Parry demonstrated that the language of Homer, long a philological puzzle because of the mix of

dialects from which it derives, was a traditional blend used only for poetic composition and almost certainly never spoken: ". . . the whole of the two poems [the Iliad and Odyssey], with perhaps a few rare verses excepted, are the work of one or a number of Ionic singers using, at about the same time, the same traditional style, which was itself an Arcado-Cyprian and Aeolic creation" (Studies II, in MHV, p. 361). An equivalent philological impasse in the language of Anglo-Saxon poetry, though complicated by a much more parochial manuscript tradition, might well be considerably elucidated by adopting a similar perspective. In addition, one can note the same mixing of dialects in the Serbo-Croatian poetic language of various areas and genres; the long diachronic development has placed Turkish words alongside borrowings from modern European languages, as well as maintained ekavski and ijekavski bi-forms for metrical purposes.

¹⁰"On Typical Scenes in Homer," review of Walter Arend, Die typischen Scenen bei Homer, for Classical Philology, 31(1936), 357-60, rpt. in MHV, p. 404-7.

¹¹For an account of the field procedures and of the collection through 1954, see the "General Introduction" and "Digest of Epic Material in the Parry Collection" in Novi Pazar: English Translations, Serbo-Croatian Heroic Songs, vol. 1, coll. by Milman Parry, ed. and trans. by Albert B. Lord (Cambridge and Belgrade: Harvard University Press and the Serbian Academy of Sciences, 1954), p. 3-20 and 21-45, respectively.

¹²See David E. Bynum, "Child's Legacy Enlarged: Oral Literary Studies at Harvard Since 1856," Harvard Library Bulletin, 22(1974), 1-37.

¹³Novi Pazar: Serbocroatian Texts, vol. 2 (1953), the original language companion to vol. 1 (see note 11); Avdo Medjedović, The Wedding of Smailagić Meho, Serbo-Croatian Heroic Songs, vols. 3 and 4 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974). (See also my review of vols. 3 and 4 in the Slavic and East European Journal, 20[1976], 203-6.) Selections from Bihać and another very long epic song by Medjedović comprise the next four volumes planned for publication in the series. Together with Bela Bartok, Lord has also published Serbo-Croatian Folk Songs (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951).

¹⁴For a complete assessment of Parry's scholarship in its contemporary context, see Adam Parry's "Introduction," in MHV, p. ix-lxii.

¹⁵"Homer and Huso I: the Singer's Rests in Greek and Southslavic Heroic Song," Transactions of the American Philological Association, 67(1936), 106-13; "Homer and Huso II: Narrative Inconsistencies in Homer and Oral Poetry," TAPA, 69(1938), 439-45; and "Homer and Huso III: Enjambment in Greek and Southslavic Heroic Song," TAPA, 79(1948), 113-24.

¹⁶(1960; rpt. New York: Atheneum, 1968).

¹⁷See also his "Composition by Theme in Homer and Southslavic Epos," TAPA, 82(1951), 71-80.

¹⁸Singer, p. 101-2.

¹⁹In addition, I would note how the manuscript is really a literary fossil, in that it preserves in synchronic distortion what is really a diachronic process. Limitations such as one singer, one song, and one text make the analysis of ancient and medieval epic song a very tentative undertaking; these qualifications are one major reason why it is essential to gain familiarity with a contemporary, observable oral tradition where such limitations do not obscure the picture.

²⁰Singer, p. 134-35: "While the presence of writing in a society can have an effect on oral tradition, it does not necessarily have an effect at all. The fact of writing does not inevitably involve a tradition of written literature; even if it did, a tradition of written literature does not inevitably influence an oral tradition." Lord distinguishes carefully between two disparate reactions to the introduction of written materials (Singer, p. 137): "Actually older unlettered singers, even when they are exposed to the reading of song books to them, are not greatly influenced," but "those singers who accept the idea of a fixed text are lost to oral traditional processes."

²¹See also his "Homer's Originality: Oral Dictated Texts," TAPA, 84(1953), 124-34. For a complete list of Lord's publications through 1973, see Edward R. Haymes, A Bibliography of Studies Relating to Parry's and Lord's Oral Theory (Cambridge: Harvard University Printing Office, 1973).

²²Only a modest review of the most important contributions is possible here. See further Haymes (note 21); James P. Holoka, "Homeric Originality: A Survey," Classical World, 66(1973), 257-93; Albert B. Lord, "Perspectives on Recent Work on Oral Literature," in Oral Literature: Seven Essays, ed. by Joseph J. Duggan (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1975), p. 1-24; and John M. Foley, "The Oral-Formulaic Approach to Old English Poetry: A Historical Bibliography," Occasional Papers of the Milman Parry Collection, forthcoming.

²³Speculum, 28(1953), 446-67.

²⁴Magoun, "The Theme of the Beasts of Battle in Anglo-Saxon Poetry," Neuphilologische Mitteilungen, 56(1955), 81-90.

²⁵Greenfield, "The Formulaic Expression of the Theme of 'Exile' in Anglo-Saxon Poetry," Speculum, 30(1955), 200-6.

²⁶"Studies in the Technique of Composition of the Beowulf Poetry in British Museum Cotton Vitellius A. xv.," unpub. Ph.D. diss. (Harvard University, 1955).

²⁷"Beowulf 2231a: sinc-fæt (sohte)," Philological Quarterly, 35(1956), 206-8; "Genesis 1316," Modern Language Notes, 73(1958), 321-25.

²⁸"The Making of an Anglo-Saxon Poem," English Literary History, 26(1959), 445-54; "On the Possibility of Criticizing Old English Poetry," Texas Studies in Language and Literature, 3(1961), 97-106.

²⁹"Old English Formulas and Systems," English Studies, 48(1967), 193-204.

³⁰"Old English Formulaic Themes and Type-Scenes," Neophilologus, 52(1968), 48-54. Fry's "type-scene" is "a recurring stereotyped presentation of conventional details used to describe a certain narrative event, requiring neither verbatim repetition nor a specific formula content," while his "theme" is "a recurring concatenation of details and ideas, not restricted to a specific event, verbatim repetition, or certain formulas, which forms an underlying structure for an action or description" (53). Compare David E. Bynum's variation on Lord's "theme" as applied to the Serbo-Croatian material: "a conglomeration of narrative matter in oral epic tradition which recurs

in the tradition, and which is discrete because some of its occurrences have no consistent sequential relationship with other such units. Defined internally, it is a conglomeration of narrative the parts of which, if they are present, occur regularly together" ("A Taxonomy of Oral Narrative Song: the Isolation and Description of Invariables in Serbocroatian Tradition," unpub. Ph.D. diss. [Harvard, 1964], p. 39). Of related interest are Mary P. Coote's four categories of theme as discussed in her "The Singer's Use of Theme in Composing Oral Narrative Song in the Serbocroatian Tradition," unpub. Ph.D. diss. (Harvard, 1968), espec. 107-14; a shorter version of this thesis is forthcoming in California Slavic Studies.

³¹John M. Foley, "Formula and Theme in Old English Poetry," in Oral Literature and the Formula, ed. by B.A. Stolz and R.S. Shannon (Ann Arbor: Center for Coordination of Ancient & Modern Studies, 1976), p. 207-32.

³²The Song of Roland: Formulaic Style and Poetic Craft (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), p. 29.

³³(Geneva: Droz, 1955).

³⁴See especially Finnegan's massive descriptive study, Oral Literature in Africa (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970); and Opland's "Scop and Imbongi: Anglo-saxon and Bantu Oral Poets," English Studies in Africa, 14(1971), 161-78.

³⁵(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974).

³⁶The Winged Word: a Study in the Technique of Ancient Greek Oral Composition as Seen Principally through Hesiod's Works and Days (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975). Compare the generative thesis of Michael Nagler's Spontaneity and Tradition: a Study in the Oral Art of Homer (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), p. 26: "All is traditional on the generative level, all original on the level of performance" (internal quotation marks deleted).

³⁷On p. 176 he remarks: "The fundamental data of an oral tradition--the substance of its traditional thought--are the phonic structures that constitute the

cores of formulas." Compare Albert B. Lord, "The Role of Sound-Patterns in Serbo-Croatian Epic," in For Roman Jakobson (The Hague: Mouton, 1956), p. 301-5.

³⁸An in-progress dissertation by Barbara Kerewsky Halpern will demonstrate the traditional structure of this and other informal genres (see further Part III, below).

³⁹See further Part III, below.

⁴⁰There is no need to enter on a description of Orasac, which has been the primary site of the Halperns' field work for over twenty years. See especially Joel M. Halpern, A Serbian Village, rev. ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1967); and Joel M. Halpern and Barbara Kerewsky Halpern, A Serbian Village in Historical Perspective (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1972).

⁴¹Lord, "General Introduction," in Novi Pazar: English Translations, p. 16: "For his Homeric studies Parry found the songs of the Moslem population of Yugoslavia more significant than those of the Christian tradition, although it should be pointed out immediately that the singing tradition of both the Moslem South Slavs and their Christian brothers is the same. This tradition is a Slavic one springing from the same roots as the Russian oral epic tradition. The Moslems, however, developed songs much longer than those of the Christians, first because for centuries they were the ruling class and had more leisure for listening to songs and stories, and secondly because the Feast of Ramazan with its thirty nights of entertainment provided a rich opportunity for sustained singing and listening from one night to the next."

⁴²In keeping with anthropological field etiquette, we have preserved the anonymity of all persons and of places other than Orašac. Throughout the informally structured meetings and interviews, various members of the Foley and Halpern families drifted in and out and mixed with those present in accord with normal village encounter patterns. A few abbreviations are employed in the data tabulation: JH = Joel Halpern, BH = Barbara Halpern, JF = John Foley, X = informant, Y = informant no. 2 (if there are two informants in a single interview),

dom. (for domaćin) = head of household where Halperns lived, dom-a. (for domaćica) = dom.'s wife, MF = Meredith Foley, KH = Kay Halpern, SH = Susannah Halpern, CH = Carla Halpern, JBF = Joshua Foley; Ćika, Deda, Tetka, and Baba = here fictive kin terms for uncle, grandfather, aunt, and grandmother, respectively; conv. = conversation, genealog = genealogical, rec. = recited (rather than sung), or recitation. Unless otherwise indicated, all songs were sung (all epic songs to the accompaniment of the gusle) and all other texts recited.

⁴³In situ observations are drawn from the field notes; comparative commentary has been added later.

⁴⁴Joel M. and Barbara Kerewsky Halpern, A Serbian Village in Historical Perspective, p. 17, define zadruga as "a residential kin unit composed of at least two nuclear family units, often including other relatives as well, who work and live together and jointly control and utilize the resources of the household." See further their chapter on "The Zadruga," p. 16-44.

⁴⁵The prelo was originally a spinning bee, which served as a meeting place for young men and women; often they or their families agreed upon marriage contracts in this multi-generational context. Today, however, the prelo has lost its original function and is an occasion, as one village elder observed, samo za igranku ("only for dancing").

⁴⁶The term zet (specifically daughter's husband and generally any male in-law) is used here to emphasize kin ties among the members of this group. The zet in this case is the occasional instance of an in-marriage male from another village who, by virtue of his marriage to a female in Orasac who had no brothers, will inherit her family's land as a surrogate son. His relationship to Deda Vlado derives from his mother's pobratimstvo (blood-brotherhood) with the singer. In the hope of gaining strength against sickness, she had sought to be ritually related to Deda Vlado by means of a ritual which takes place at the graveyard. Once the synthetic kin tie of brother and sister is established in this way, it becomes permanent: the zet considers himself the singer's nephew, and Deda Vlado pronounced their relationship "najrodjenije" (idiomatically, "the closest possible"). See further Joel M. Halpern, A Serbian Village, p. 162-63.

⁴⁷Compare Barbara Kerewsky Halpern's "Genealogy as Genre," also in this volume.

⁴⁸It should be noted that reading is a very difficult process for the semi-literate Čika Mika. Like most village men his age, he had only four years of village schooling.

⁴⁹Note the metrical flaw in the fourth line: the first colon, On mene, has only three instead of the usual four syllables. This is a fairly common abridgment in the sung texts of the Parry Collection as well, a problem which the singer Ibrahim Bašić solves by doubling the vowel and inserting a glottal stop to simulate two syllables.

⁵⁰See Murko, La poésie populaire . . . , p. 24.

⁵¹See note 9.

⁵²There has been little study of the relationship between the performance melody and the traditional oral aspects of the song. See Lord, Singer, p. 37; George Herzog, "The Music of Yugoslav Heroic Epic Folk Poetry," Journal of the International Folk Music Council, 3(1951), 62-64; Roman Jakobson, "Studies in Comparative Slavic Metrics," Oxford Slavonic Papers, 3(1952), 21-66; and John Miles Foley and Barbara Kerewsky Halpern, "'Udovica Jana': A Case Study of an Oral Performance," Slavonic and East European Review, 54(1976), 11-23.

⁵³This and similar idiosyncrasies that arise in performance may speak by analogy to some of the manuscripts which remain from now defunct oral traditions. See further Part III, below.

⁵⁴023, a male practitioner of bajanje, learned the charm from his strina (father's brother's wife) on her death-bed, only when there remained very little time for her to pass it on and there was no close female relative currently in the village to receive it.

⁵⁵The following two passages, drawn from the AEcerbot ("Land-remedy") charm, provide a clear example of the Old English blend of Christian with pagan elements:

Eastweard ic stande, arena ic me bidde,
 bidde ic þone mæran domine, bidde ðone miclan drihten,
 bidde ic ðone haligan heofonrices weard,
 eorðan ic bidde and upheofon
 and ða soþan sancta Marian (26-30).

Erce, Erce, Erce, eorþan modor,
 geunne þe se alwalda, ece drihten,
 æcera wexendra and wridendra,
 eacniendra and elniendra,
 sceafta hehra, scirra wæstma (51-55).

Eastward I stand, I ask with prayers,
 I ask the illustrious Master, I ask the great Lord,
 I ask the holy Guardian of the heavenly kingdom,
 I ask earth and heaven
 And the true holy Mary (26-30).

Erce, Erce, Erce, mother of earth,
 May the all-ruler, the eternal lord, grant you
 Fields growing and thriving,
 Reproducing and gaining strength,
 Tall shafts, shining crops (51-55),

The Old English text is taken from E.V.K. Dobbie, ed.,
The Anglo-Saxon Minor Poems, The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records,
 vol. 6 (New York: Columbia University Press, rpt. 1968),
 p. 117-18. For the texts of most of the extant Old English
 charms, see Felix Grendon, "The Anglo-Saxon Charms,"
Journal of American Folklore, 22(1909), 105-237; and
 Oswald Cockayne, Leechdoms, Wortcunning, and Starcraft of
Early England, 3 vols. (1864-66; rpt. Wiesbaden: Kraus,
 1965). On the source of the puzzling designation Erce
 (l. 51 above), see Audrey R. Duckert, "Erce and Other
 Possibly Keltic Elements in the Old English Charm for Un-
 fruitful Land," Names, 20(1972), 83-90.

⁵⁶This is a folk characterization of internal dis-
 orders associated with excessive child-bearing; it is
 equivalent to sagging womb and displacement of other
 internal organs.

⁵⁷Bede, A History of the English Church and People,
 trans. by Lee Sherley-Price, rev. by R.E. Latham (London:
 Penguin, rpt. 1970), p. 251-52: "When Caedmon awoke, he

remembered everything that he had sung in his dream, and soon added more verses in the same style to a song truly worthy of God." See Francis P. Magoun, Jr., "Bede's Story of Caedmon: The Case History of an Anglo-Saxon Oral Singer," Speculum, 30(1955), 49-63; and Donald K. Fry, Jr., "Caedmon as a Formulaic Poet," in Oral Literature: Seven Essays, p. 41-61.

⁵⁸I use the word "recollect" to distinguish between an active recalling and articulating (the oral technique) and a passive musing (our concept of "to remember"). Other oral cultures also understand recollection as an active process, as witnessed by the Old English term for uttering a song: wrecan, "to drive (out)" (cp. Serbo-Croatian terati, with the same meaning and used for the same purpose).

⁵⁹See note 52.

⁶⁰This practice, essentially the elimination of a syllable (je bilo becomes simply the past participle bilo), is very similar in function to the Homeric Greek deletion of augment in the aorist tense of certain verbs; both features are metrical accommodations. The Old English line, which does not impose as strict syllabic rules on utterance, lacks such adjustments, though its stress-positions govern word order if not syllabic number in other ways.

⁶¹Responsions of sound are fundamental to oral art. In the Anglo-Saxon Beowulf such acoustic patterns find simplest expression in what is usually called "verbal echo" and most complex actualization in Lord's "themes." See further note 37.

⁶²"'Udovica Jana' . . . ," p. 22.

⁶³A version of this study, with emphasis on the ethnographic and symbolic factors involved in the practice of bajanje appears as "Bajanje: Healing Magic in Rural Serbia," in Culture and Curing, ed. by Peter Morley and Roy Wallis (London: Peter Owen), forthcoming 1978.

⁶⁴To this list may be added the [i:] - [a] vocalic sequence of line 4.

⁶⁵Mora is genitive singular of the neuter noun more ("sea"), while odmora is genitive singular of the masculine noun odmor ("delay, pause"). Speakers of Serbo-Croatian will note certain inconsistencies in syntax and morphology, attributable to both variance of rural speech patterns from standard urban speech and to oral transmission.

⁶⁶Persa is one solution to the problem of constructing a metonym from the trisyllable prestani; it represents the prefix pre- with metathesis.

⁶⁷Examples of other studies of bajanje, mostly partial texts and ethnographic data, include: S. Knezevic and M. Jovanović, Jarmenovci (Beograd: Srpska Akademija Nauka, 1958); J. M. Pavlović, Život i običaji narodni u Kragujevačkoj Jasenici u Šumadiji (Beograd: Srpska Kraljevska Akademija, 1921); A. Petrović, Rakovica: socijalno-zdravstvene i higijenske prilike (Beograd: Biblioteka Centralnog Higijenskog Zavoda, 1939); and P. Ž. Petrović, Život i običaji narodni u Gruži (Beograd: Srpska Akademija Nauka, 1948).

⁶⁸For a summary of research on this problem, see A.J. Bliss, "Single Half-lines in Old English Poetry," Notes & Queries, 18(1971), 442-49.

⁶⁹Major works on Old English metrics include: Eduard Sievers, Altgermanische Metrik (Halle, 1893); M. Kaluza, Der altenglische Vers: eine metrische Untersuchung (Berlin, 1925-29); John C. Pope, The Rhythm of Beowulf, rev. ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966); Robert P. Creed, "A New Approach to the Rhythm of Beowulf," Publications of the Modern Language Association, 81(1966), 23-33; A.J. Bliss, The Metre of Beowulf, rev. ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967); and Thomas Cable, The Meter and Melody of Beowulf (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1974).

⁷⁰All Genesis quotations are taken from George P. Krapp, ed., The Junius Manuscript, The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records, vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, rpt. 1969).

⁷¹The corresponding phenomenon is not observed nearly as often in the ten-syllable epic line, probably because the four- and six-syllable cola form an asymmetrical line.

⁷²Compare the very similar closure to Malalehel's first genealogy: "oðpæt he forð gewat" (Genesis 1068b).

⁷³See note 55.

⁷⁴See the charm "Wið dweorh" (Against a dwarf"), in The Anglo-Saxon Minor Poems, p. 122, lines 16-17.

⁷⁵Indogermanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch (Bern and München: A. Francke, 1959, 1969), vol. 1, p. 428; p. 105-6.

⁷⁶For the sake of comparison, I would note that the oral epic seems to function as a psychohistory. See further my "Beowulf and the Psychohistory of Anglo-Saxon Culture," American Imago, forthcoming.

⁷⁷See especially Robert E. Diamond, The Diction of the Anglo-Saxon Metrical Psalms, Janua Linguarum, Series Practica, 10 (The Hague: Mouton, 1963); and Allan A. Metcalf, Poetic Diction of the Old English Meters of Boethius (The Hague: Mouton, 1973), two studies which show how a translator-poet rather mechanically rendered a Latin original in Anglo-Saxon prose.

⁷⁸See footnote 21.